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More support available for cat owners

A subsidy intended to help pensioners and low income earners meet the cost of compulsory cat sterilisation will be boosted due to a slow response to the program.

City of Albany residents who hold a Healthcare Card, Pension Card or Seniors Card are able to receive a 50 per cent discount of the cost of cat sterilisation until June 1 2014.

The offer was originally to expire on December 31 2013 but has been extended. All Albany veterinary clinics are part of the program and the subsidy is able to be deducted directly at each vet.

In addition, low income earners and pensioners are still eligible for completely free three-year registration of their cats.

Free registrations can be claimed upon producing proof of sterilisation and microchipping at the City of Albany North Road office.

Under the State Government's Cat Act 2011, which came into full effect in November 2013, all cats aged six months or older must be sterilised, microchipped and registered.

While the City of Albany did not introduce this legislation, it is responsible for enforcing it.

The City is currently finalising a partnership with the Shire of Plantagenet for a shared holding facility for cats whose owners are found to be in breach of the law.

Soon any cats found to be non-complaint will be taken to Mt Barker, with fines payable upon release.

City of Albany Ranger and Emergency Services Manager Tony Ward encouraged the community to spread the word about the new laws and the subsidy program.

"The last thing we want is to have to force cat owners to drive to Mt Barker to pick up their beloved pets, so please, make sure your cat is sterilised, microchipped and registered," he said.

The sterilisation subsidy is a partnership between the City of Albany and the Department of Local Government and Communities.

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